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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 TEL AVIV 002567

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: IDF SOLDIER STABBED IN WEST BANK ATTACK; 12 PALESTINIANS WOUNDED IN BARRIER PROTESTS -- APRIL 25, 2005 (1300 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

11. (SBU) Summary: An IDF soldier sustained moderate injuries after he was stabbed in the neck April 23 near Ganim settlement, east of Jenin. The IDF closed the area while in pursuit of the assailant, but no arrests have been made in connection with this attack. In the Old City of Hebron, settler youths attacked 15 female Palestinian students April 23, and a 70-year-old Palestinian man was attacked by settlers while grazing his sheep near the settlement of Alon Moreh, near Nablus, April 24. A number of the girls were bruised from the April 23 attack, while the elderly man was hospitalized with moderate injuries. A total of 12 Palestinians were injured during clashes with IDF troops near Safa village, west of Ramallah, April 22. In Gaza, PA security forces, in coordination with the IDF, blocked a tunnel used for smuggling opposite the al-Salaam quarter of the Rafah refugee camp April 24. Palestinian militants fired four mortars and one Qassam rocket at IDF and Israeli settler targets in Gaza April 22-24. No injuries were reported. End Summary.

12. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian reports, 12 Palestinians were injured during clashes with IDF troops near Safa village, west of Ramallah, April 22.

-- Injuries: According to media reports, an IDF soldier sustained moderate injuries after he was stabbed in the neck April 23 near Ganim settlement, east of Jenin. The IDF closed the area while in pursuit of the assailant, but no arrest have been made in connection with this attack.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian reports, a Palestinian minor was injured moderately April 24 in Bethlehem when an explosive device he was holding detonated in his hand.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian sources, a Palestinian man was injured in Arjut village, near Nablus, April 24 when an explosive device detonated underneath him as he was grazing his sheep next to the village.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinians sources, the IDF arrested a Palestinian in possession of four pipe bombs outside Nablus April 22.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian media, the IDF arrested a Palestinian youth trying to smuggle ammunition in a videocassette near Nablus April 22.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinians sources, two Palestinians were arrested at Bayt Forik checkpoint, near Nablus, April 23 for suspicion of attempting to attack an IDF soldier.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian reports, IDF soldiers arrested five Palestinians April 23 in al-Dahariya village, near Hebron.

-- Attacks: According to Palestinian sources, settler youths in the Old City of Hebron attacked 15 female Palestinian students April 23. Many of the Palestinian girls suffered bruises as a result of the attack.

-- Attacks: According to Palestinian media reports, a 70-year-old Palestinian man was attacked by settlers while grazing his sheep near the settlement of Alon Moreh, near Nablus, April 24. The man was hospitalized with moderate injuries.

13. (SBU) SECURITY INCIDENTS:

-- According to Palestinian media, IDF soldiers entered Nablus and the nearby Balata refugee camp to conduct searches April 24.

14. (SBU) PROTESTS:

-- According to Palestinian reports, a demonstration against the construction of the separation barrier was held April 25 near the villages of Bil'in and Safa, west of Ramallah.

-- According to Palestinian media reports, a demonstration against Greek Orthodox Patriarch Irenios was held after Sunday mass in the Old City of Jerusalem April 24. Demonstrators demanded Irenios' resignation, reportedly calling him a "traitor" and charging him with direct responsibility for selling property in the Old City to Israeli settler groups.

Gaza

15. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants fired a total of four mortar shells at Neve Dekalim settlement April 22-24. Militants fired one Qassam rocket at towards Yad Mordechai crossing (in Israel) April 24. No injuries were reported in any of these attacks.

-- Shootings: Palestinian militants launched a total of five shooting attacks against IDF and Israeli settler targets April 22-24.

-- Explosions: UNRWA reported that PA security forces, in coordination with the IDF, blocked a tunnel used for smuggling opposite the al-Salaam quarter of the Rafah refugee camp April 24.

16. (SBU) ARRESTS:

-- UNRWA reported that the IDF arrested two 15-year-old Palestinian youths April 23 when the youths attempted to cross into Israel illegally north of Kissufim.

17. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open April 22-25, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinians April 21-24, and 4,500 laborers and 345 merchants crossed into Israel April 21. On April 22, 1,665 laborers and 82 merchants entered Israel; on April 23, 145 laborers and 15 merchants entered; and on April 24, 54 laborers and 16 merchants entered Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was open April 21, and 633 laborers entered. Erez Industrial Zone was closed April 22-24.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers April 22-23, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction. On April 24, the crossing was closed, re-opening for the import of aggregates used in construction April 25.

-- Karni Terminal was open April 22-23 and April 25. Karni was closed April 24.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures April 23-25.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed April 22-25. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

18. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- UNRWA reported that a small group of armed men, reportedly members of the PA security forces dismissed in 2004 for "anti-Palestinian activities," blocked the coastal road south of Netzarim Junction for several hours the morning of April 24. The men demanded they be reinstated into the security forces.

-- UNRWA and Palestinian media reported that a group of approximately 250 members of the PA National Security Forces who had been dismissed demonstrated at the Saraya Building in central Gaza City April 23, protesting against the retirement plan and the leak of their names to the media.

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